

## **It's different, only different**

By Anna Julia Schmidt and Jacqueline Schieferstein

"Santa Claus and Christkind - my children think it's awesome!" says Professor Crister S. Garrett and smiles.

After growing up in California and studying American Culture and History, he went to Germany to teach as a Professor at Leipzig University. He married a German woman who enjoys "watching American football" whereas he likes "sitting in a good old German Biergarten." He has two homes, as he explains thoughtfully: "America is my first, Germany my second home." To be torn between different cultures and prejudices implies drawing conclusions on your own, Mr. Garrett had to learn over the years.

"Germans are very organized, so they would say Americans are chaotic, but I prefer saying flexible and creative..." After scanning the American and the German faces around him, he admits craftily with an impish grin: "But I like the typically German attitude" and makes every German happy by saying this.

But what place will make him and his wife happy in 20 years? "Maybe Germany, maybe the USA, Australia or even China." Maybe then his children will celebrate Christmas by themselves, they will get a cosmopolitan education and realize: "Life is a gift, you should use it to see new things!" and, as Professor Garrett explains with sparkling eyes:

"America is not better than Germany, or the other way around. It's different, only different, but that's what makes life interesting."